

System Configuration (C) Copyright 1985-1990, American Megatrends Inc.,

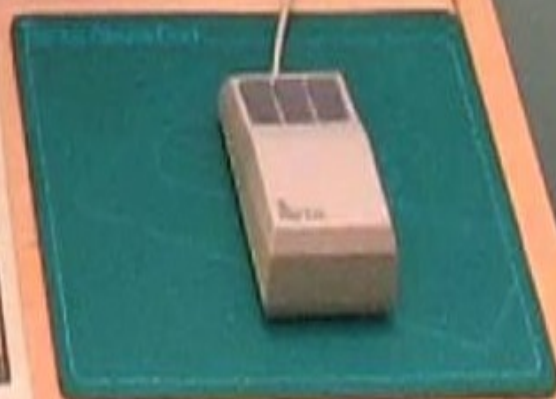
Main Processor	: 68030	Base Memory Size	: 640 KB
Numeric Processor	: None	Ext. Memory Size	: 7168 KB
Floppy Drive A:	: 1.44 MB, 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	Hard Disk C: Type	: 47
Floppy Drive B:	: 1.2 MB, 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	Hard Disk D: Type	: None
Display Type	: VGA/PGA/EGA	Serial Port(s)	: 3F8, 2F8
ROM-BIOS Date	: 05/05/91	Parallel Port(s)	: 378

Starting MS-DOS...

Growing Up  
Geek



3.5"



# FILENAME: C:\JOURN\J122691WPD (Dec 26, 1991) – INTRO

## DISCLAIMER:

The story you are about to read is fiction. It is my first attempt at writing a novel, and like most authors are taught, I have drawn heavily from my personal experiences to create it, however the work itself is fiction and any resemblance to real people living or dead is purely coincidental.

Today is Friday, Dec 26, 1991

Hi - I am recording this on my new 80386 computer!  
- My parents bought it for me from the Sears catalog,. I am sooo excited !!

Oh, yeah, I'm Derick .... I have been basically hand writing a journal of sorts since I was in grade 8 (about 2 years ago), mabe even in grade 7 for a bit. So I figured I'll start recording these 'electronically' from this point forward.

hmmm, not going to put my last name just in case anyone ever finds these files. I honestly don't know how my parents can afford it, the machine is like \$2,000 a far cry from the little commodore I had when I was 8. They said it is an investment in my future. I need to make sure I pay them back..somehow!

Reading the MS-DOS manual, trying to figure out the commands and stuff, it came with a program called WordPerfect which i am writing this in now. It's pretty easy to use, I like learning the commands, you push the F10 key to save. I tried looking at the inside of the file in ms-dos editor, it's just a bunch of characters that make no sense..and if I try to change them, i can't read the file anymore. So I'm guessing it's encrypted somehow, but still, going to play it safe, not revel too much information.

Oh and it comes with a MODEM too!!, so I can connect to other machines, need to figure out how that works.

I'll try to write, maybe once a week, document what i figure out as I go...

**FILENAME: C:\JOURN\J010292.WPD (Jan 2, 1992)**

Today is Jan 2, 1992

Happy New Year!

Been playing around with Microsoft Windows 3.1, after the machine turns on, you just type 'win' to run it. It's really nice graphics compared to the DOSHELL program, there seems to be no sounds though other then a 'beep' that comes from the speaker when you click on something. I don't think this machine has its own sound card.

Windows has other programs that come installed with it, one is a solitaire game, their is a MS-DOS prompt, and a game called minesweeper. It doesn't have a lot of stuff installed on it..Showed it to my friend Mark who was over today, we played it on it for most of the day.

**FILENAME: C:\JOURN\J010892.WPD (Jan 8, 1992)**

Today is Saturday Jan 8, 1992

Been playing with the modem a bit, the computer came with a program called 'COM2COM'. When you start it up, it brings up a settings screen and you have to pick the settings for your modem

Took me a while to figure out what the settings were, basically you have to pick a 'COM Port' a

parity, stop bits. Whe, you put it in it seems to summarize it at the bottom of the screen 24008N1.

Every time I got the setting wrong, the app would just freeze saying 'Initializing Modem' and I'd have to restart the computer eventually after trying all the settings I could think of it finally started up. It shows a long message AT [bunch of other letters] and then ends with 'OK' on its own line.

Need to play around with the commands.

Back to school in 2 days...not looking forward to it at all

## **FILENAME: C:\JOURN\J011592.WPD (Jan 15, 1992)**

Okay so, this week I figured out how to write my own programs on this computer. It does have a version of basic on it called 'QBASIC'.

It runs the same commands pretty much that I learned on my old commodore with my dad

When i was about 8, I got my first computer, it was a commodore 16 and it hooked up to the TV screen with a game switch like the atari uses, the whole machine was 'built' into the keyboard, not like this 386 which has its own CPU box, plus it's own monitor and keyboard.

I remember my dad and I would spend hours typing away at the keyboard writing programs from Byte magazine, just to run them to make the screen change colors. We could only save to a cassette tape, and running the programs again from the tape would take forever to load.

Still my dad would read the program and i would type away his commands. Shortly after i started writing my own programs for myself, nothing too fancy. I remember i did one that basically asked multiple choice questions, and that flashed the screen multiple colors if you got the right answer.

Funny thing that this new machine is so much more powerful, it has a whole 40MB disk, no tapes and things run soo much faster..but the old commodore

seemed to have better sounds, this one doesn't seem to do much more then a few beeps.

I see this machine also came with 2 BASIC games already on it, one is called NIBBLES.BAS, and the other is called GORILLAS.BAS. I looked at the code, strange thing is they don't have line numbers, so even though I ca write line numbers, and it will work as I am used to, there seems to be more to this basic then I am used to.

Still you have to run the 'QBASIC.EXE' and then pass your own program to it to run it, it doesn't seem to let me make .EXE files of my own.

**FILENAME: C:\JOURN\J011892.WPD (Jan 18th, 1992)**



So school sucked pretty bad today, we were told for English class we have to conduct our own interview. It has to be an adult with a job. We are not allowed to interview someone in our family, though it can be on any topic we have to write a report up on what we learned.

I have no idea who I am going to interview!, The whole thought of it makes me nervous inside, speaking to someone I don't even know. I think a lot of the other kids are going to interview their friends parents. I could hear them talking about it..but as usual I don't have anyone. I basically only have the one friend in my grade, and he's not even in my same English class.

We walk together most lunch times though. We basically became friends at the beginning of the year. Friends have always been tricky for me. Mostly what I call the '3 friend problem'

Say you have 2 friends that you hang out with "A" and "B". and they are both fiends with each other. Now I can hang out all afternoon with 'A' and have a great time... or I can hang out another afternoon with 'B' and have loads of fun..bu t if the 3 of us are together it's like "A" and "B" are completely different people, sometimes they play well with one another, and talk about lots of things I am not really interested in, sometimes they even tease me for not being interesting in..It's like I know I have things in common with each of them, why can't we have things in common together?

It's like people are completely different with one person then with another..Like sometimes I notice when my mom answers the phone and talks to someone like a teacher, or whatever, her voice changes completely like it's not even really her taking, then the moment she hangs up the phone, she's back to the mom I know...

Who is the "real" person, the person on the phone or the person in 'real life?'

**FILENAME: C:\JOURN\J012092.WPD (Jan 20, 1992)**

Today is January 20th, 1992

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Okay so I figured in Word Perfect I can record quick 'macros'. So I don't have to manually type the date each time. It is 'sort of' like programming.

Anyway - my mom spoke to my aunt, who has a friend Joe, and Joe agreed to let me interview him. So I decided that I would do the interview as a tape recording and then type up the results on my computer here and print them on my dot matrix printer.

Plus, as a bonus, I learned that he is into computers too, and has his own 80486, so my interview is going to be about computers, obviously, though I'm as nervous as hell, I don't even know this guy and I am basically being dropped off at his house this Saturday morning. so I better get my questions ready.

In other news, our school library got it's first "real" computer too, I'm not sure what model it is yet, but my typing teacher said that I could take a do a few of my 'typing' class at the library if

I want, [which I take to mean I can have some free time to play with it] I am already at the required words per minute to pass the class anyway..probably due to all the typing I have been doing on my home computer I guess.

#### Word Perfect Shortcut reminders

F10 - Save document

F5 - Open document

Shift+F1 settings (F1 itself is 'help' but not really good)

CTRL+F10 record a macro

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## FILENAME: C:\JOURN\J012492.WPD (Jan 24th, 1992)

Today is Sunday Jan 24th, 1992

So my "interview" went AWESOME!. Joe was a pretty cool guy for an older adult. He let me record the whole thing on audio tape. The first few 15 minutes or so were pretty awkward, I asked my prepared questions. I think he could tell how nervous I was.

Then he starting showing me some stuff on his computer, I pretty much when 'off script' after that. He connects to 'BBS's (Bulletin Board Systems) all the time. That is what you do with your modem, basically he has numbers of dial up sites that you can connect to and do all sorts of stuff, like chat, play games, and even download other games and files. He doesn't se the COM2COM program he uses one called TELIX and he made a copy of it form on a floppy disk that i can use myself. He also gave me the phone numbers of a few BBS's, he said the best is called 'C-LINK SYD' but it is a subscription service and it costs \$11/month, you can get the first 30 days for free though if I want to try it.

Need to finishing writing up the notes of my interview for class next week though, hopefully I'll have some time to play around after that.

## FILENAME: C:\JOURN\J020692.WPD (Feb 6, 1992)

Today is Thursday Feb 6, 1992

So after a lot of complaining to my mom, I was finally allowed to try out C-LINK SYD. I had to promise that it wouldn't cost any money and that I wouldn't get in any 'trouble' dialing this number from Joe.

I have yet to 'finish' getting connected., I put the number in the Telix Address book. I got it to dial, and got to the login screen.

Joe told me when it prompted for a login: you just typed "guest" so I did that and then it started taking me through a bunch of questions. I got what I guess was about halfway through the connection, when suddenly it just popped up a bunch of strange characters kind of like:

WE0A92RT09SFA09JAW

NO CARRIER

About 2 seconds later my mom yells to my dad telling him there was a strange 'noise' on the phone when she picked it up.

I then had to run up and explain that if they pick up the phone while I'm online that it will disconnect me. Well mom wanted to call her sister, so I am here typing this know waiting for

her to be done. (I also had to explain that 'online' meant i was connected to a BBS (ie: short for 'on the phone line') seemed obvious to me.

FILENAME: C:\JOURN\J020892.WPD (Feb 8, 1992)

Today is Saturday, February 8, 1992

Why do people SUCK SO BAD??

He got me again, just before Gym class today. His name is Brutis. Just before Gym class starts, him and his "friends" corner me in the locker room, push me around into the lockers, call me a geek, a nerd.

I think it bugs them that I don't 'get mad', I don't 'fight back'. I just sort of cuddle in a little ball and wait for it to be over. Oh how I dread Gym class.

And it's not like I don't "tell anyone".. It only makes things worse. Once I told the principal, they got called into the office, and i was sent outside. About 20 minutes later out they came with smirks on their face. I could tell just by the way they looked at me that I was going to get it worse next time.

Tried once talking to my mom about it. She thinks I should fight back, but I know it will just get me into more trouble, so what's the point.. plus their are multiple of them and they are much bigger then me, so why would i provoke them..they might really hurt me..

No it's best just to keep it inside for now, maybe writing it here will help, who knows??

I spent most of this afternoon on the C-LINK BBS. Once I got connected and a guest account setup, it told me I can access it for the next 30 days. I haven't "sent" anything yet. Mostly just reading the posts from others, there is a games area, and you can play a few little text games, but nothing to special. Most of the people on it seem older, talking about cars, and complaining about their jobs. There is a special spot for buying/selling stuff in the area near where I live, that seems a bit interesting.

The owner of the BBS is called the 'SysOp' it means 'System Operator', he is basically the guy who makes up all the rules about how you are supposed to use the system.



## FILENAME: C:\JOURN\J021192.WPD (Feb 11, 1992)

Today is Feb 11, 1992

We got our mark back from our 'interview' projects today. I got 86/100. Most of the loss in mark was due to spelling mistakes. The paper did ask me to talk to her (the teacher) after class. She told me that if I was this interested in BBS's, she could request an account for me on EduNET. Apparently it's a 'BBSs' for teacher.

I told her sure, though frankly I don't now what a BBS for teachers would be like or why it might be useful, but she said she'd get back to me in a few days.

Been mostly working on my 'QBASIC' program to search the video tapes. It works okay, but you have to type lot to do a search. I wish I had something that I could make more graphics, even the 'notepad' program inside windows is easier to use, then my program at the moment.

Might rent a video this weekend, maybe Back to the Future Part 3 if it's in. Hopefully it's not in the 'new releases' section any more.

## FILENAME: C:\JOURN\J022392.WPD (Feb 23 1992)

Today is Feb 23, 1992

It's late night Sunday - haven't had a chance to write in a while, or even be at my computer, which sucks a bit because I did get the EduNET phone # from the teacher the other day.

Our family has been visiting our uncle every night this week. He owns his own garage (which we all call 'The Shop'. He is my Dad's brother, and he has a wife... (Barbara)..oh his name is Dave (not that I would forget that!)

Anyway, sad news is Barbara is in the hospital, apparently she was in a car accident and it was pretty bad. I now this is bad to say, but I never really liked Barbara, she always speaks to me in a 'demeaning tone'. You now the one I mean, it usually starts with "Now Derek.." or "Derek dear" in a sort of high pitched whiney tone. I like my name, except when she speaks it somehow she makes it sound sooo annoying.

Anyway they have a son, (Carl), he's about a year older than me. So we were down almost the shop almost every night this week helping out with suppers and cleaning and stuff..well i was mostly playing on Dave's NES (Nintendo Entertainment System). At home we have an old Atari, i used to play it some when I was younger but the NES is WAY better

I did get in a bit of trouble spending so much time on it and not helping out like the rest of the family, my mom even yelled at me that I was 'too anti-social' in front of the rest of the family...whatever!

## FILENAME: C:\JOURN\J022892.WPD (Feb 28 1992)

Today is Tuesday, Feb 28th, 1992

So I finally got onto 'EduNET' today, setup a guest account. There was no 'guest' thing the account name and password was given to me by the teacher. The software that runs this BBS is obviously different from C-LINK SYD. EduNET seems to be using something called 'CBBS' where the other one used something called "MajorBBS". This one didn't seem to have nearly the graphics (or any games) and was mostly a 'bulletin board' of postings from teachers.

I spent an hour looking around at the posts, a lot of teachers sharing ideas on lessons plans and such, pretty boring stuff. Their were a few teacher names that i recognized, and they had a quite a few "interesting" posts about their students...none if it really 'good' either, and a lot of complaining

In fact, while I was reading some of it, it made me wonder if I was 'supossed' to have an account on here, I mean these teachers would never say anything like this to me in person, and yet here are all their 'dirty' little secrets being spread out to all the other users who had an account. .Would they be typing stuff like this if they knew students were reading it? Are their other students reading it?

I sent a message to the SysOp letting him now my

age (< 16), and that I was surprised at some of the things people posted on here. It was either extremely boring or "interesting" in a peep show kind of way.. I told him I was on C-LINK SYD, so he knew i at least that I knew something about 'BBS's'